

Name: _____

Period: _____

Decoding Neanderthals

Over 60,000 years ago, the first modern humans—people physically identical to us today—left their African homeland and entered Europe, then a bleak and inhospitable continent in the grip of the Ice Age. But when they arrived, they were not alone: the stocky, powerfully built Neanderthals had already been living there for hundreds of thousands of years. So what happened when the first modern humans encountered the Neanderthals? Did we make love or war? That question has tantalized generations of scholars and seized the popular imagination. Then, in 2010, a team led by geneticist Svante Paabo announced stunning news. Not only had they reconstructed much of the Neanderthal genome—an extraordinary technical feat that would have seemed impossible only a decade ago—but their analysis showed that “we” modern humans had interbred with Neanderthals, leaving a small but consistent signature of Neanderthal genes behind in everyone outside Africa today.

1. Where did Neanderthals live?
2. What was the average lifespan of a Neanderthal?
3. When did Neanderthals disappear?
4. How long did Neanderthals cohabit Europe with humans?
5. Where did Scientist find Neanderthal DNA?
6. What percentage of Neanderthal DNA is found in the modern human Genome?
7. What two regions' of people have the least amount of Neanderthal DNA?
8. What region has the highest amount of people with Neanderthal DNA?
9. What was the highest percentage of Neanderthal DNA in the people interviewed?
10. What is the likeliest reason we have Neanderthal DNA in our DNA?